

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 6, 2020

Administrator Jovita Carranza
U.S. Small Business Administration
409 3rd St, SW
Washington, D.C. 20416

Dear Administrator Carranza:

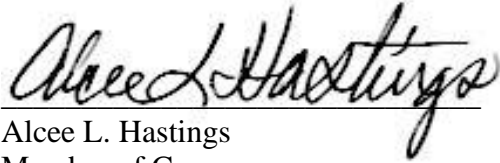
We write as representatives of Florida's farming community to express our grave concern with the Small Business Administration's (SBA) decision to preclude agriculture enterprises such as farms from eligibility for the Emergency Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, despite the impact COVID-19 has had on their viability as small businesses.

As you know, the agricultural sector in Florida is the second largest contributor to our state's economy. Florida is home to over 47,000 farms across 9.7 million acres of land that contribute to the national food supply chain and billions of dollars to our economy. The rapid spread of COVID-19 has caused the demand for Florida farmers' produce to decline significantly as part of a chain reaction that has reached numerous sectors, businesses, and communities. The closure and reduced service of restaurants, tourist attractions, and the overall restriction of movement throughout the state clearly and directly affects farmers, however farms are listed as an ineligible entity on the EIDL application.

This has not only affected Florida, but farmers across the United States who face loss of product, income, and business due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our farmers feed the nation, and Florida's specialty crop producers ensure year-round access to seasonal fruits and vegetables and a steady food supply chain. We ask that the Small Business Administration extend EIDLs to small business farmers, so they may access much needed financial support and stability during this time of immense uncertainty. Specifically, we ask that you remove "agriculture enterprise" as an ineligible entity on the EIDL application, so that farms that meet the guidelines of a small business may receive the relief that will allow them to stock our grocery produce sections and continue to cultivate and harvest their crops. It is incumbent on the federal government to provide stability to those most in need, during a time of health and economic crisis. Therefore, we implore you to respond to the clear, immediate need of our agricultural businesses and the families that rely on them to put healthy, low-cost food on their tables.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent request, and we look forward to collaborating with you to protect and bolster our small business community as our nation progresses through this crisis.

Sincerely,



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress



Al Lawson
Member of Congress



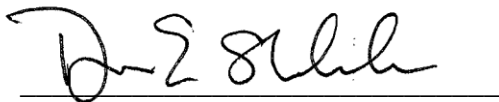
Charlie Crist
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



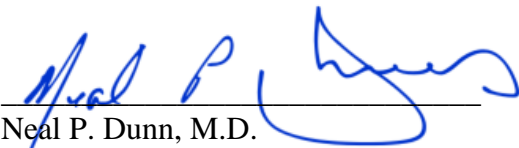
Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress



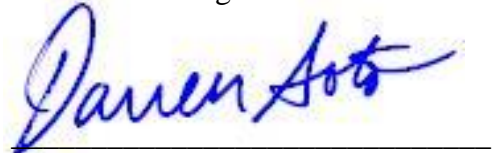
Donna E. Shalala
Member of Congress



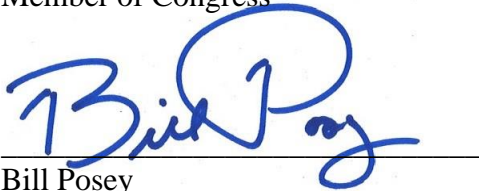
Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
Member of Congress



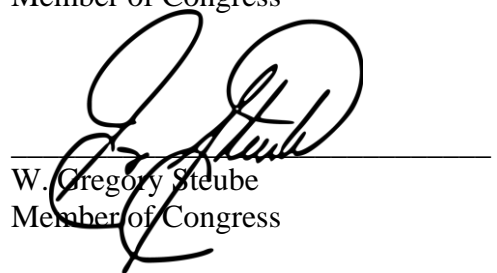
Neal P. Dunn, M.D.
Member of Congress



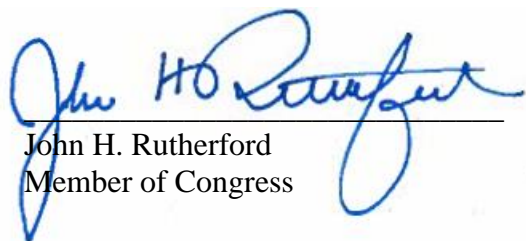
Darren Soto
Member of Congress



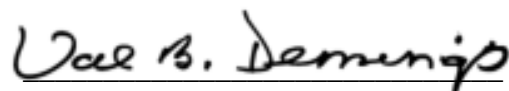
Bill Posey
Member of Congress



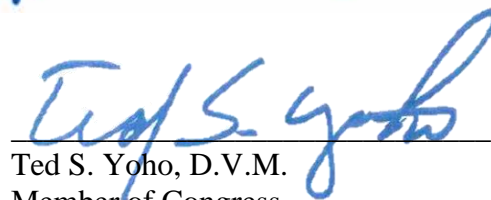
W. Gregory Steube
Member of Congress



John H. Rutherford
Member of Congress



Val B. Demings
Member of Congress



Ted S. Yoho, D.V.M.
Member of Congress

Cc:

Secretary Sonny Perdue
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave SW
Washington, D.C. 20250